

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. Therefore, balance is a requirement of good stewardship. We won't get balance unless Sinclair agrees to give John Kerry equal time. The only fair thing to do is agree, as Sinclair has been asked to do, to air "Going Up River," the story of John Kerry's service in Vietnam and of his subsequent activities in opposition to that war. If Sinclair refuses equal time to John Kerry by airing "Going Up River," it confirms the worst about itself--that it is a corrupt mouthpiece for political interests which it has supported and from which it expects favors in return, that it has betrayed the public trust which grants it the right to use the public air waves and must be punished.

If the FCC permits Sinclair to get away with betraying its mission to serve the public, the FCC again demonstrates why we need new FCC leadership to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.